



**The Mark of  
Environmental  
Responsibility**

## **Third-Party & Eco-label Certification**

Cheryl Baldwin, Ph.D.  
Vice President of Science and Standards  
Green Seal, Inc.

FTC Green Packaging Claims Workshop  
April 30, 2008

- What is certification
- What are eco-label certification programs
- How do these programs relate to packaging claims





# Green Seal, Inc.

## Leading US Type I Eco-Label Program

- Non-profit, independent organization that promotes a more sustainable economy
- 1. Set environmental leadership standards
- 2. Certify products and services
- 3. Assist with greening of governments and institutions
- 4. Educate purchasers



# What is Certification?

Certification =

Standard with set criteria &

Verified to meet the standard and  
criteria



# What's the Role of Third-Party Certification

- Independent
- Verified/Substantiated
- Consistent and Transparent Standard
- Open Process for Standard Development



# Credible SUBSTANTIATION is Important



The Mark of Environmental Responsibility

# Leading Third-Party Eco-Label Certification Options

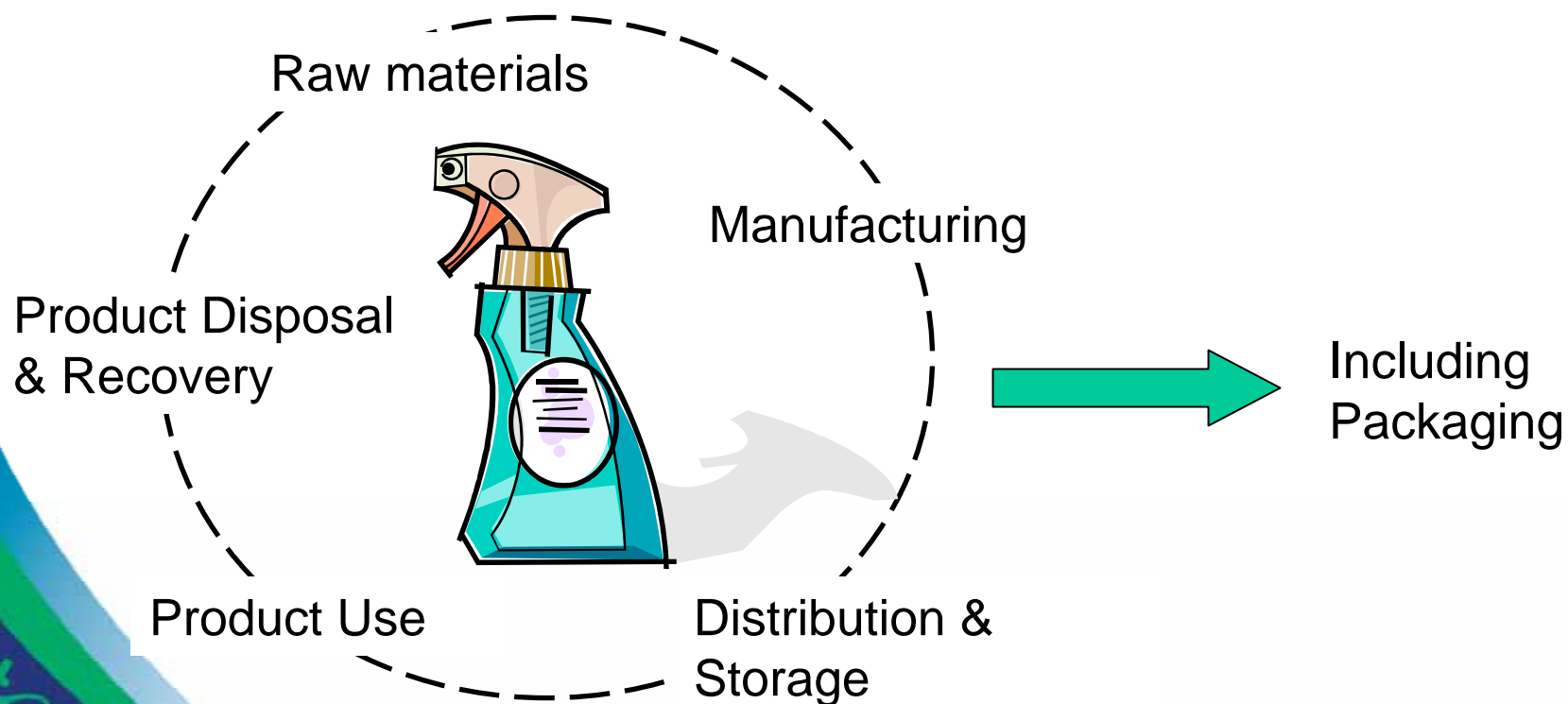
- Single attribute claims and labels
  - Recycled content
  - Compostable



- Multiple attribute/Type 1 claims and labels
  - Life cycle-based



# Multi-Attribute/Type 1 Claims and Labels Incorporate Environmental and Health Considerations Throughout the Life Cycle of the Product





# What are the Claims and Labels from Multi-Attribute/Type 1 Certification Programs

- Example:



Manufacturer Choice:

“Environmentally preferable cleaner”

“Package contains 25% post-consumer material”

- Statement on the basis for certification: *“This product meets the Green Seal™ environmental standard for industrial and institutional cleaners based on its reduced human and environmental toxicity and reduced volatile organic compound content.”*
- Marketing evaluation of other claims made on product



# What is the Package's Impact on a Product's Life Cycle

- Overall, ranges widely
  - Main sources of impacts: Resource use, distribution efficiency, waste
- Thus, priority (and relevant claim) depends
  - Light weighting may be better than recycled content



# Keep the System In Mind...

- A leading consumer packaged goods company assesses the product and its packaging together.
  - For their products, the biggest impacts generally relate to the product.
  - Transitioning from washing powder to tablets, while having some negative packaging implications, had an overall life cycle improvement since significantly less product was used per wash, i.e. it has eliminated wastage through over-dosing.

Envirowise: Packaging Guide



# What is the Role of the Package Claim

- Instructive: can recycle, can compost, can refill
- Market differentiation: recycled content, source-reduction



Packaged product  
(packaging material)

Package



Multiple attribute  
claims may be more  
appropriate



# RELEVANCE is Important



The Mark of Environmental Responsibility

# FTC's General Principles for Environmental Claims & Third Party Certification

Qualification and disclosure

Distinction between product and package

No overstatement of attributes

Basis for any comparisons

Third-party certification provides independent and credible

**substantiation**

Multi-attribute/Type 1 programs also add **relevance** and evaluate compliance to laws administered by FTC



The Mark of Environmental Responsibility

# Thank You

[www.greenseal.org](http://www.greenseal.org)



**The Mark of Environmental Responsibility**